

## FIGHTING THEM OVER.

What Our Veterans Have to Say About Their Old Campaigns.

## KILPATRICK'S RAID.

Gen. Minty Taken Exceptions to a So-called History.

EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: A few days since I saw for the first time a copy of the little book entitled "Kilpatrick and Our Cavalry," written by James Moore, M. D., Surgeon, 5th Pa. Cav., and naturally turned to the "Raid around Atlanta," the one great incident of his career, with which I, as one of the principal actors therein, am thoroughly familiar, and was very much disappointed to find that the author of this work, which purports to be history, either knew absolutely nothing of that which he was writing, or, knowingly and intentionally, falsified the so-called history.

Kilpatrick was one of the most gallant and dashing cavalry officers in the grand army of the Republic during the war of the rebellion, and any honest man, writing a history of his exploits, has a fruitful field to work from, without departing from truth or wandering into the realm of fiction.

As an instance of the mendacity of the author, I repeat his account of the great saber charge made during the raid:

"He determined to cut his way out. He moved his men in six columns. Col. Minty's Brigade, First Division, had the right; Col. Murray's Brigade, Second Division, had the left of the first line of columns; Col. Long's and Jones's Brigades held the rear, while our eight pieces of artillery were rapidly firing on the enemy."

"The charge was sounded and our men rode over the rebel barricades, forcing the men in the rear, capturing four pieces of artillery and three battle-flags and a large number of prisoners."

The absolute facts were given in detail in THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE of July 10, 1889. I briefly recapitulate a part of the account: Kilpatrick's Division was the Third, and before starting on the expedition he turned over the command to Col. Murray, his senior brigade commander. I commanded two brigades and the Chicago Board of Trade Battery, from the Second Division. The First Division was commanded by Gen. Ed. McCall, and took part in the expedition, the mendacious historian to the contrary notwithstanding.

When Kilpatrick learned that we were surrounded, he sent for me as one of his division commanders. When I reported to him he addressed me as follows: "Col. Minty, we are surrounded. You know what is in our front; Jackson with 5,000 cavalry in rear of our left, and Col. Chalmers with 10,000 infantry closing on our right; our only salvation is to cut our way out. We will form here, facing to our present rear, and we will strike the right of the rear Col. Murray will form on the left; you will change simultaneously."

I said: "General, I would not charge over this ground in line. If we ever strike the enemy, it will be in a wavering line that will amount to nothing."

He said: "How, then, would you charge?" I replied: "In column, sir. Our momentum would be like that of a steam train; when we strike, something has to break."

He paused for a moment and then said, "Form in any way you please."

I formed my brigade in three columns, at four, at regimental distance; the 7th Pa. on the right, the 4th Mich. in the center and the 8th Ind. on the left. I ordered Col. Long to form his brigade, consisting of the 8th and 4th Ohio, in rear of my center, in column, with regimental front and to "sweep up whatever I broke through."

My battery and ambulances were placed on the McDonough road, in rear of the 4th U. S. Cav.

When my command was formed, I rode over to Kilpatrick to report to him; at the same moment Col. Murray said to me: "General, my men cannot charge over this ground." "Why not," I asked Kilpatrick. "They cannot do it," General, repeated Col. Murray.

Turning to me, Col. Kilpatrick said, "Col. Minty, are you ready?" "All ready, sir," I replied.

"Then charge when you like," said the General.

I rode to the head of my center column and ordered, "Draw sabers!" followed by "Forward, trot; regulate by the center column—march!"

As my column got in motion, the "gallop" and "charge" were ordered by me, and the charge was made by the First or Sabre Brigade.

Col. Long broke into columns of fours and followed the First Brigade, and the Third Division also breaking into column followed my battery.

Col. Moore says: "After charging over the enemy, the General reformed his brigades and divisions, and fell slowly back toward McDonough's, severely resisting such attacks as were made upon his rear."

The facts are, that as soon as we had cut our way through the surrounding force, Gen. Kilpatrick, with the Third Division, marched toward McDonough, leaving orders for us to cover his retreat. I instructed my Provost-Marshal, Capt. Dickson, of the 7th Pa., to at once turn over the prisoners to the Third Division, and I sent Lieut. Simpson, of the 4th Mich., a temporary A.D. on my staff, to Col. Long with orders to dismount his brigade, form across the McDonough road, and hold the enemy in check as long as possible. When he had proceeded to fall back through the first brigade. At this moment Capt. McIntyre, commanding 4th U. S., reported that his regiment was out of ammunition, and I directed him to follow Gen. Kilpatrick.

I dismounted the 7th Pa. and 4th Mich., and placed them in position on rising ground, with an open space in front of them, the 7th Pa. and one section of the battery on the right and the 4th Mich. on the left of the road, and instructed them to construct rear breastworks as quickly as possible. The horses of both brigades were strung out on the road in our rear.

Col. Long was brought to the rear, wounded, and the command of his brigade devolved on Col. Eggleston, of the 1st Ohio, who soon after reported that Chalmers's infantry was endeavoring to turn both of his flanks. I ordered him to fall back, and as he passed the First Brigade I instructed him to move his men on to the double-track, to mount his guns on the high ground, to take position with Lieut. Robinson's guns on the high ground beyond the swamp in front of him.

The enemy followed him closely and made a vigorous assault on the position held by the 4th Mich. and 7th Pa., but were repulsed with heavy loss. The section of artillery was doing most effective work in the position, when one of the guns burst, and a few minutes later a shell wedged in the other gun, rendering it for the time useless. I therefore directed Mr. Bennett to take it to the rear and join the battery. A second and a third assault was made on the position held by the two regiments of the First Brigade, and both were handsomely repulsed.

After the repulse of the third assault, the Second Brigade being well out of the way, we fell back to our horses and followed the column. I found Col. Eggleston with his brigade and Lieut. Robinson's two guns in position on the high ground beyond the swamp. Immediately after the charge the rain came down in torrents, and it continued to pour without cessation until about 4 o'clock in the morning.

Chalmers followed us through the swamp, but a few shells checked him, and we saw nothing more of him until the morning.

When the command returned to its position in front of Atlanta, the officers and men of Kilpatrick's Division, said "Col. Minty cut the most gallant soldiers of the war, and it was my pleasing duty more than one occasion, while he served in my brigade, to make special honorable mention of him for gallant conduct in the field."

## BATTLE OF GAINES'S MILL.

The Army of the Potomac Fighting by Detail. EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: In a recent issue of your paper, "Volunteer," in writing of the battle of June 27, 1862, says if one of a number of officers he mentions had been in command on that day, the rebellion would have ended there and then. While I do not claim that much, I firmly believe that our forces been properly handled on that day, the rebellion would have got a big black eye, if not nothing worse. About noon on June 27, 1862, Newton's Brigade, of Franklin's Division, consisting of 9th Pa., 18th, 31st and 33d N. Y., in camp on the south side of the Chickahomney, got orders to reinforce Porter's Division, on the north side of the Chickahomney. We went double quick for several miles, until a short distance from Gaines's Mill, and went into position on Porter's right, where our regiments seemed to be trying to turn it. Before forming line of battle, went through a large peach orchard loaded with peaches, and the boys helped themselves on the fly, but there were as hard as bricks, and a storm of bullets cut off limbs and peaches all around us.

We swung into line of battle under a heavy fire, and the 18th N. Y. were ordered to charge the woods. We started and got near the edge of the woods, when we got such a terrific fire it staggered us for a moment. We were ordered to lie down, and a battery on our right flank fired a round of canister over the woods; then we rose up, and giving them a volley charged into the woods, until we came to a swamp that was filled with green briars and underbrush. Not one of the old vets who have wrestled with the green briar in its native lair—especially under a storm of bullets—well know the amount of grit and sweat words it takes to get through the briars. I was not, I will only say as a Sunday-school picnic it would not be a success.

After crossing the swamp we drove the Johnnies some distance, until we found they were trying to turn our left flank. There was a large space between our left and Porter's right flank where the Johnnies got through, and we had to fall back to prevent them from getting in a difficult gap, although writing about the same battle, engaged the same day, and perchance on the same part of the field, and almost side by side? Comrades, you must remember that as you charged that day those rebel breakwaters were not there, but they were there when we were ordered to charge. They went at it with leveled voices on a sweeping gallop. They got several volleys of grape and canister that sent them down the road, but they went on and disappeared in the smoke of the rebel guns. We had often made fun of them, and called them "turkey chasers," but we took it all back then.

While waiting for orders we could see the battle on our left, where the Pennsylvania Reserves and Saylor's Brigade seemed to have a tough time of it, to judge by the heavy firing. They were on the defensive, and the Johnnies could not force them back. There was a rebel battery that annoyed them, and their cannons were ordered to charge. They went at it with leveled voices on a sweeping gallop. They got several volleys of grape and canister that sent them down the road, but they went on and disappeared in the smoke of the rebel guns. We had often made fun of them, and called them "turkey chasers," but we took it all back then.

The battery soon opened fire again, so I judge the charge failed. A few minutes after we saw a body of cavalry, with drawn sabers, start for the same battery. They moved as if on parade, and the battery fired at them with flashing sabers and a furious roar that seemed to carry all before it, they went over the rebel guns. The battery tried to check them, but many a brave fellow went down before their fire, but the rest went on and the rebel guns were silent for some time. I heard that they were the 5th U. S. Cav. but am not certain, and would like to hear from some of the boys who made those charges, if any are alive yet.

The question has often occurred to me, why were we sent within those woods in small detachments for no reason he may have, and on the defensive we could have held the Johnnies in check. Then, again, except some artillery firing, the rest of the army did not fire a gun, except Porter's Division and Newton's Brigade. As we left the field the Irish Brigade took our place and held the Johnnies in check until ordered about midnight—J. SHAW, Co. H, 95th Pa., Reading, Pa.

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N. Hooper, Co. G, 11th Me., Machias, Me., thinks the account of Maj. Stewart's capture of Fort Gregg incorrect, and would ask the Major if he remembers the 100 picked men from the 11th Me. who acted as sharpshooters to silence the big guns at the fort before the charge was made. The writer was one of the sharpshooters. The Major is also mistaken as to the composition of the Third Brigade of Porter's Division, Twenty-fourth Corps. It was composed of the 10th N. Y., 24th Mass., Conn., and 11th Me., not the 8th Me., as stated by the Major. This brigade led the charge on Fort Gregg, and was supported by two brigades from Ord's command.

The G. A. R. Next Day. G. L. Camp, Adjutant, Garfield Post, 25, Athens, Tenn., in regard to the communication of a comrade of Dodge County, Wis., in which he suggests admitting sons of honor to the G. A. R., says that he does not see how they can be considered in any other way than as sons of veterans. It has been truly said that there is no other organization in the world that has so many young men grow up to fill the places of the old ones who die out; but when the last soldier is dead the Grand Army ceases. The writer thinks there is no harm in the Northern States who do not belong to the G. A. R., but it is not the case in East Tennessee, for there are many who are not yet members. There is a considerable number who cannot read or write, and it is very little satisfaction for them to belong to anything they cannot understand the workings of.

Good for the Vermonters. R. R. George, Co. D, 5th Vt., Adrian, Mich., having seen an article which said that the Sixth Corps was not the first to break the rebel lines near Petersburg, April 2, 1865, says as follows: On the night of April 1, which was dark as pitch, the order came to fall in and march over the breastworks toward the picket-line. After reaching the picket line formed in line of battle and the Vermonters were ordered to the front. About 1 o'clock on the morning of April 2 a signal gun was fired which gave the form for the first time, the music to be furnished by the participants. They were ordered to pay no attention to the rebel picket, and not to fire until they were ordered to do so. The rebel picket did not see them until they got within 20 feet, it being so dark. While waiting through the abatis the rebel main line opened on them with their artillery and musketry from their breastworks. It up the country around so they could see where they were going. They charged and took the works, and the writer does not think there was any regret about his in that charge. The writer was slightly wounded in the breast, and came near being bayoneted by the rebel, but a member of his company brought his gun-barrel down on the rebel's head, which he had been the sound of that gun-blow until this day. The fight did not last long at such close quarters, for some of the rebels threw up their hands, while others like the writer, the brigade moved on until they reached the South Side Railroad, where they tore up the track. It was a glorious victory, and the Vermonters got there for certain.

D. W. Light, Co. M, 5th Ohio Cav., Chantam, Kan., thinks Comrade Helbert has forgotten about Herbert's old fighting Fourth Division, September, 1862. The writer has a faint recollection of the troops going on the trip mentioned, but cannot figure out where the Third Brigade of the Fourth Division came in. He is right, however, about whipping Price at the Clinch, but is a little off about the commanders, for Herbert commanded until the infantry charged down to the river, when Ord superseded him. The first and second battalions of the regiment were with Herbert's Division from the day before the battle until Grant started for Vicksburg the first time, and he felt to remember both two brigades being in the colors of the 4th Cavalry, as there were the other by Lamm, and if the comrade was in the Third Brigade the writer would like to know who the other brigade commander was.

A. Randolph, Co. A, 16th Pa. Cav., Apollo, Pa., thinks it about time to give the old soldiers a rest after the batteries that fought in the Peach Orchard at Gettysburg, as he thinks that history and the monuments erected ought to settle the question to the satisfaction of all concerned.

L. L. Shephardson, Co. C, 1st Mass. H. A., Second Brigade, Third Division, Second Corps, Brooks, Mass., says it may be new to some of our readers that his regiment was not in the Second Corps. He would like to correct a phrase in his communication, which should read, "Although my regiment was in the Second Corps."

William Duncan, Captain, Co. D, 12th U. S. C. T., Carbondale, Kan., says that Capt. Beninger, 13th U. S. C. T., is mistaken regarding the colors of the 13th Cavalry, as there were two brigades, one commanded by Col. Charles L. Thompson, composed of the 12th and 13th U. S. C. T., and the other of the 14th, 17th and 18th U. S. C. T., Gen. Morgan.

The writer does not know about the fighting of the other regiments, but the 13th did as good fighting and stood up to the rack as well as any troops he saw during the war.

R. F. Magee, Montmorency, Ind., notices that when comrades undertake to describe what did not take place in their immediate presence, or depend upon others for information, they are apt to make mistakes, and the writer is careful to state only facts. In this connection he calls attention to Sherman's Memoirs, Book 2, page 150, where he attributed the capture of a certain fort to the 13th Cavalry under Gen. Corse at Allatoona on Oct. 5, 1864. The writer is sure the General is mistaken, and asks that comrades of the "Lightning Brigade," especially members of the 4th U. S. Cav., tell him really did it, and when it was done. For evidence contrary to the General's statement, he refers to the history of the 72d Ind. page 496.

Grows. A. J. Norman, Logan, Iowa, says the Pension Office will tell you that you do not need an attorney; that you will be assisted with your claim by the Bureau, and not hindered. The writer knows of an instance where a comrade applied for an increase some time ago, and received notice that the application had been received and filed. Not hearing from it, again applied for an increase, and was told that the application was filed, and that he was to wait for an increase. Now there is a new order prohibiting the publishing of the postoffice address of claimants, and the writer is sure that the Pension Bureau for permitting unscrupulous and incompetent attorneys to practice before it. The soldiers are competent to say whether they want attorneys to look after their interests.

W. C. Morrill, First Lieutenant, 37th Ill., Austin, Tex., writes a stinging letter in regard to the treatment he received in the Texas Legislature on account of his being a Union soldier and a pensioner. He was a candidate for an office in that body, and was otherwise very acceptable to the members, but Representative A. J. Baker, of Tom Green County, denounced him because he was a member of the G. A. R. and in receipt of a pension from the United States Government. This speech was greeted with great applause and was the only one that was so applauded. Comrade Morrill has been a life-long Democrat, and has resided

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L. L. Shephardson, Co. C, 1st Mass. H. A., Second Brigade, Third Division, Second Corps, Brooks, Mass., says it may be new to some of our readers that his regiment was not in the Second Corps. He would like to correct a phrase in his communication, which should read, "Although my regiment was in the Second Corps."

William Duncan, Captain, Co. D, 12th U. S. C. T., Carbondale, Kan., says that Capt. Beninger, 13th U. S. C. T., is mistaken regarding the colors of the 13th Cavalry, as there were two brigades, one commanded by Col. Charles L. Thompson, composed of the 12th and 13th U. S. C. T., and the other of the 14th, 17th and 18th U. S. C. T., Gen. Morgan.

The writer does not know about the fighting of the other regiments, but the 13th did as good fighting and stood up to the rack as well as any troops he saw during the war.

R. F. Magee, Montmorency, Ind., notices that when comrades undertake to describe what did not take place in their immediate presence, or depend upon others for information, they are apt to make mistakes, and the writer is careful to state only facts. In this connection he calls attention to Sherman's Memoirs, Book 2, page 150, where he attributed the capture of a certain fort to the 13th Cavalry under Gen. Corse at Allatoona on Oct. 5, 1864. The writer is sure the General is mistaken, and asks that comrades of the "Lightning Brigade," especially members of the 4th U. S. Cav., tell him really did it, and when it was done. For evidence contrary to the General's statement, he refers to the history of the 72d Ind. page 496.

Grows. A. J. Norman, Logan, Iowa, says the Pension Office will tell you that you do not need an attorney; that you will be assisted with your claim by the Bureau, and not hindered. The writer knows of an instance where a comrade applied for an increase some time ago, and received notice that the application had been received and filed. Not hearing from it, again applied for an increase, and was told that the application was filed, and that he was to wait for an increase. Now there is a new order prohibiting the publishing of the postoffice address of claimants, and the writer is sure that the Pension Bureau for permitting unscrupulous and incompetent attorneys to practice before it. The soldiers are competent to say whether they want attorneys to look after their interests.

W. C. Morrill, First Lieutenant, 37th Ill., Austin, Tex., writes a stinging letter in regard to the treatment he received in the Texas Legislature on account of his being a Union soldier and a pensioner. He was a candidate for an office in that body, and was otherwise very acceptable to the members, but Representative A. J. Baker, of Tom Green County, denounced him because he was a member of the G. A. R. and in receipt of a pension from the United States Government. This speech was greeted with great applause and was the only one that was so applauded. Comrade Morrill has been a life-long Democrat, and has resided



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healthful and vigorous, and enables the woman of middle age to retain the freshness of girlhood upon brow and cheek, the light of youth in her eyes, and its elasticity in her step.

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